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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
MCT-02 EUR-12 EB-08 IO-13 /099 W
----------015684 092146Z /73
R 081315Z SEP 78
FM AMCONSUL DURBAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3051
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
USDAO PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L DURBAN 0527

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, MILI, SF
SUBJ: INDICATIONS OF INCREASED SECURITY CONCERN FROM SAG AND SADF OFFICIALS

REF: DURBAN 395

1. RECENT INDICATIONS HAVE SHOWN A HEIGHTENING OF SAG AND S.A. DEFENCE FORCE CONCERN ABOUT POSSIBLE FUTURE SECURITY PROBLEMS IN NATAL:

A. ON SEPTEMBER 6 THE COMMANDING OFFICER, NATAL COMMAND (S.A. ARMY) CONVENED ALL THE MPS AND SENATORS FROM NATAL, AS WELL AS SOME LEADING PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT FIGURES, TO A BRIEFING ON THE NEED FOR DECREASING RACIAL FRICTION AND INCREASING UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION TO LESSEN THE POTENTIAL DANGERS WHICH HE EXPECTED FROM TERRORISM FROM ACROSS SA'S BORDERS;

B. ON SEPTEMBER 7 THE DURBAN PORT CAPTAIN ANNOUNCED THAT FOR "SECURITY REASONS" CERTAIN HARBOUR WATERS ADJACENT TO
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PIER 1 AND ISLAND VIEW HAVE BEEN DECLARED A RESTRICTED ZONE IN WHICH NO UNAUTHORIZED BOATS MAY ENTER. (COMMENT: THE AREA AFFECTED ESSENTIALLY SURROUNDS THE S.A. NAVY BASE AT SALISBURY ISLAND, WHERE THE THREE ISRAELI-PROVIDED RESHEF PATROL CRAFT ARE BERTHED. THE RESTRICTION WAS ORDERED BY THE LOCAL S.A. NAVY COMMANDER AND IS APPARENTLY DESIGNED TO PRECLUDE SMALL BOATS FROM APPROACHING TOO CLOSE TO THIS AREA. IT COULD

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BE AS MUCH TO IMPEDE CLOSE OBSERVATION OF THE NEW CRAFT AS TO PREVENT POSSIBLE TERRORISTS FROM ATTACKING THE NAVY INSTALLATION.)

C. THE PORT CAPTAIN AT RICHARDS BAY TOLD CONOFF AND ASSISTANT NAVAL ATTACHE ON SEPT. 6 THAT THE NAVY IS PLANNING ON THE BASIS THAT ACTIVE TERRORISM MAY BE EXPECTED IN NATAL BY 1980 AND THAT STEPS ARE BEING TAKEN AT RICHARDS BAY TO PROTECT THE HARBOR AND VESSELS FROM POSSIBLE SABOTAGE. STEPS MENTIONED INCLUDE BASING A 400-MAN "NAVAL INFANTRY" FORCE TO PROTECT THE HARBOR PERIMETER AND ESTABLISHING MOBILE ANTI TERRORIST TEAMS. (USDAO TO REPORT MORE FULLY ON THIS ASPECT OF SITUATION).

D. SIX MONTHS AGO THE ENTIRE BLUFF AREA OVERLOOKING DURBAN HARBOR WAS DECLARED OFF-LIMITS TO CIVILIANS. THIS HAD BEEN ONE OF DURBAN'S MOST POPULAR SCENIC OVERLOOKS. REASON FOR CLOSURE WAS RAPID EXPANSION OF MILITARY INSTALLATIONS ON BLUFF WHICH SADF LIKELY WANTED TO KEEP FROM PUBLIC ATTENTION.

2. COMMENT: THERE IS AN APPARENT RISING AND GENUINE CONCERN AMONG SADF AND SOME CIVILIAN OFFICIALS THAT TERRORIST PROBLEMS WILL DEVELOP IN NATAL. RECENT EVENTS IN NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THIS APPREHENSION. HOWEVER THE GENERAL ATTITUDE AMONG CIVILIANS AT LARGE IS THAT THE S.A. MILITARY ARE WELL PREPARED AND ANY TERRORIST PROBLEMS
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WHICH DEVELOP WILL PROVE TO BE MANAGEABLE. THIS ATTITUDE IS BASED, IN PART, ON THE MODERATE ROLE OF THE ZULU COMMUNITY UNDER PRESENT LEADERSHIP, BUT COULD CHANGE IF CHIEF BUTHELEZI WERE NO LONGER ON THE SCENE OR SHOULD VEER AWAY FROM HIS CUSTOMARY INSISTENCE ON NON-VIOLENT POLITICAL TACTICS.
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